



# CHICAGO

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## Cops & Kids Chess Initiative



The Chicago Public Schools, Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation, in partnership with the Chicago Police Department, developed the Cops & Kids (**C&K**) Chess initiative. C&K is a year-round after-school program for elementary (5-8) and high school students which includes 2 tournaments with student and police officers and Criminal Justice professionals. The program is intended to promote peace in home and school communities and increase positive relationships between youth and police officers while utilizing the game of chess as the vehicle for engagement.

### Goal

To afford additional engagement opportunities to students from diverse communities throughout the city and employ police officers to serve as mentors and role models through this chess centered program. A pilot program has been developed in approximately 18 selected CPS schools and police districts in communities in need. Organize 2 citywide chess tournaments where cops and kids will compete as team members in a fun, rewarding and safe environment.

### Importance of chess

We recognize the many outcomes and skills that students acquire from chess; such as strategy, analytical, critical thinking, team building, math concepts and life skills to name a few. Chess will serve as the vehicle to engage and foster positive relationships with the Chicago police, law enforcement and criminal justice professionals.

### Objectives

- Promote peace
- Promote family and community engagement
- Increase positive relations between youth and police officers
- Provide fun, rewarding, and safe out of school time activities
- Foster ongoing relationships between students and police officers

- Provide a safe and supportive environment
- Increase in academic, social and life skills
- Support Chicago Public Schools' chess programs
- Career awareness in law enforcement and criminal justice industries

### **Cops & Kids (C&K) Initiative**

The Initiative will establish and support approximately 18 after-school chess programs within police districts in communities in need in the 2017-18 school year. In collaboration with the Chicago Police Department, police officers will visit clubs or meet at an off-site neutral location on a weekly basis to interact and play chess with the students. C&K will bring the academic benefit of chess to students while providing them with positive social groups, goals and aspirations, and will allow all students to expand their thinking and alleviate social pressures in a safe environment.

The Initiative will also support local community chess programs; i.e. chess a National Night Out events, Family Chess Day at a school, community chess classes, etc.

### **Cops & Kids (C&K) Chess Tournament**

Sponsored by the Chicago Public Schools and Renaissance Knights Foundation in partnership with The Chicago Police Department and the showcase event for the initiative will be open to players in grades 5-12 from participating CPS schools. The tournaments will be structured as a team event where students will be partnered with a police officer or law enforcement personnel to form teams. The teams will compete in a 4-round no elimination tournament. Trophies will be awarded in each section and each participant will receive a commemorative souvenir.

### **Additional Tournaments**

Renaissance Knights will provide additional opportunities for students in the C&K program to participate at no cost in chess competitions and matches; including the Greater Chicago Championships, All-Girls National Championships, and online tournaments. By funding over 1000 free memberships to the Internet Chess Club (ICC) for CPS students, including those students participating in the C&K program, Renaissance Knights will be organizing online tournaments during the season through the ICC platform. These free memberships will allow students full access to the ICC website in the **child protected mode**.

### **Support and Partners**

We will accomplish our goals through coordinated efforts using a cooperation model. We will drive the initiative through strategic partnerships and support from key political, community and business leaders, parents and the students.

We have garnered the support of Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Chicago Police Department Superintendent Eddie Johnson, Chicago Board of Education President Frank Clark, Chicago Public Schools Chief Education Officer Janice Jackson, and 1st Ward Alderman Joe Moreno.

## **About Renaissance Knights**

Renaissance Knights is a nonprofit 501(C)(3) educational organization dedicated to bringing the many benefits of chess to children and young people throughout the Chicago area by providing a complete chess curriculum, enrichment programs, tournaments and events. Since 2006, we have been partnered with Chicago Public Schools. Through this partnership we have established and support over 50 after school chess clubs, served over 25,000 children, provided thousands of dollars' worth of equipment and scholarships to Chicago children, schools and community groups, and sponsored chess at many special events in Chicago

## **About the Chicago Public Schools**

Chicago Public Schools serves 381,000 in 652 schools. It is the nation's third-largest school district. Through the Academic Chess programs and the First Move Programs, CPS currently provides chess opportunities to several thousands of CPS via in-school and after school chess programs. Our goal in the near future is to expand chess programming and initiatives and to afford chess opportunities to additional low resourced students from diverse communities throughout the city.

## **More Information**

[www.chess4chicago.org](http://www.chess4chicago.org)

### **Chicago Public Schools**

Sylvia Jordan – Director Academic Competition

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### **Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation**

David Heiser – President

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

RAHM EMANUEL  
MAYOR

June 1, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

As Mayor, and on behalf of the City of Chicago, I would like to take this opportunity to express my enthusiastic support for the Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation.

Established a little over a decade ago in 2005, the Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation (KCF) has quickly become one of our city's most venerated youth advocacy organizations. Since its onset, the Foundation has proven how learning the game of chess enriches children socially and educationally. Staff and volunteers provide innovative and interactive educational spaces for children of all backgrounds in and around Chicago lead and learn through the game of chess. To date, KCF has taught the game of chess to more than 20,000 students and hosts several popular tournaments throughout the year. Their highly anticipated events draw players from across the nation allowing students to participate in important cultural exchanges and form new bonds all while showcasing and sharpening their skills. The ongoing efforts of the Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation undoubtedly impact culture, community, and change.

Many KCF students have gone on to achieve great things at the local and national level in chess competition. But success in the game of chess also translates into success inside and outside of the classroom from critical thinking and problem solving across all subjects to heightened mathematics skills. So the Foundation's collaboration with Chicago Public Schools has always given students an advantage. As Mayor, I could not be more excited that KCF's incredible work is helping to prepare the city's next generation of leaders. But as a resident, I could not be more proud that they are augmenting the learning and enhancing the lives of Chicago's children and families. One game of chess at a time, the Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation demonstrates to youth how every decision and every move impacts every outcome and that will always be an invaluable lesson. I fully support the Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation and hope you will too.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rahm Emanuel".

Mayor



# Board of Education

City of Chicago

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June 9, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

As the President of the Chicago Board of Education, I strongly advocate for opportunities that enrich the lives of our students both socially and academically. The Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation is an organization that aspires to such a goal affording students from diverse communities the opportunity to engage in fun, rewarding, and safe out of school time chess programs.

Renaissance Knights has developed a meaningful partnership with CPS to provide youth chess enrichment programs, competition and tournaments for students. Through this collaborative effort, thousands of CPS students have developed the fundamental skills needed to be successful in school and life beyond the classroom -- life skills such as strategy, team building, analytic and critical thinking, and problem solving to name a few. Also, especially important for a district such as ours, this type of program offers students a safe place off the streets, where they can learn during the peak hours that juveniles are typically victims of crime or engage in criminal activity themselves.

In my role here at the Chicago Public Schools, there is nothing more important to me than the education and safety of our children. I enthusiastically support the efforts of Renaissance Knights as they seek to bring the benefits of chess to more schools and students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank M. Clark".

Frank M. Clark  
President



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May 25, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter in support of the Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation's work with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and their aspiration to provide opportunities for students from diverse communities to engage in fun, rewarding, and safe out of school time chess programs.

Renaissance Knights has developed a long standing partnership with CPS to provide youth chess enrichment programs, competition and tournaments for students. This includes the Cops & Kids Chess Initiative, a year-round after-school program for elementary and high school students, as well as a tournament with police officers and student players. Through these collaborative efforts with Renaissance Knights, thousands of CPS students have developed the fundamental skills necessary to succeed both socially and academically. The program also gives students a safe place where they can learn during the peak hours that juveniles are typically victims of crime or engage in destructive activity themselves.

As the Chief Education Officer for Chicago Public Schools, there is nothing more important to me than the education and safety of our children. I recognize the value of the many outcomes and skills that chess provides our youth including strategy, analytical and critical thinking, team building, math concepts, and life skills. I am also convinced that chess programs help develop critical and creative thinking skills that will benefit our children, schools, and the community at large. That is why I fully support the efforts of the collaboration between Chicago Public Schools and Renaissance Knights as they seek to bring the benefits of chess to more schools and students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janice K. Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janice K. Jackson, Ed.D.  
Chief Education Officer  
Chicago Public Schools



Rahm Emanuel  
Mayor

Department of Police · City of Chicago  
3510 South Michigan Avenue · Chicago, Illinois 60653

Eddie T. Johnson  
Superintendent of Police

Chicago Public Schools – Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation

Re: *Cops & Kids Chess Initiative*

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the Chicago Public Schools' and Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation *Cops & Kids Chess* Initiative. It is our aspiration to afford additional engagement opportunities to students from diverse communities to engage in fun, rewarding and safe out of school time chess programs.

Chicago Public Schools and Renaissance Knights have had a long standing partnership to provide youth the enrichment of chess instruction, competition and tournaments. This new initiative expands on the outstanding work they have been doing by using chess as a vehicle to promote non-violence and foster positive relationships among Chicago police officers and youth from diverse communities throughout the City of Chicago.

We recognize the many outcomes and skills that chess provides our youth as it employs strategies that include analytics, critical thinking, teamwork and math concepts – just to name a few –which can all be applied to improving their overall life skills. Also, very importantly, programs such as this offer students a safe place where they can learn during the peak hours that juveniles are typically victims of crime or engage in criminal activity themselves.

By having police officers regularly participate in the program, we will increase positive relations between youth and police officers. Through our combined efforts, we will help children develop the fundamental skills necessary to succeed both socially and academically, help reduce youth violence and keep kids out of gangs and in school.

We at the Chicago Police Department believe that nothing is more important than the education and safety of our children, and we fully support the efforts of the Chicago Public Schools and Renaissance Knights as they seek to bring the benefits of chess to more schools and students. We are delighted for the Chicago Police Department to serve as a partner with this initiative, and are convinced that any programs that can help our students develop critical and creative thinking skills will benefit our children, schools and the community at large.

Let's make every move count for our youth.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eddie T. Johnson".

Eddie T. Johnson  
Superintendent of Police



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## PROCO JOE MORENO

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May 15, 2017

I am writing this letter in support of the Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation's partnership with the Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Police Department, through the **Cops & Kids Initiative**. This partnership provides students, from diverse communities, opportunities to engage in fun, rewarding, and safe out-of-school-time chess programs.

During the past 10 years, Renaissance Knights has been highly successful in fulfilling its mission of bringing the many educational benefits of chess to our community residents by providing youth chess enrichment programs, tournaments and special events to thousands of children each year. This new initiative uses chess as a vehicle to promote non-violence and creates positive engagement between the Chicago Police Department and youth from diverse communities throughout the city of Chicago.

By hosting a Cops & Kids Chess Tournament and having police officers regularly participate in the after-school chess programs, the partnership increases positive relations between youth and police officers. Through the combined efforts of Renaissance Knights, Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Police Department, children are developing the fundamental skills necessary to succeed both socially and academically, while helping to reduce youth violence by keeping kids out of gangs and in school.

As Alderman, there is nothing more important to me than the education and safety of our children, and the need to provide them with high-quality, extended academic learning programs. Therefore, I enthusiastically give the Renaissance Knights and their Cops & Kids initiative my fullest support. Let's make every move count in the education of our youth.

Sincerely,

Proco Joe Moreno

Alderman, 1<sup>st</sup> Ward